

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 IO-13 EB-07 AID-05 OMB-01  
TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03  
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
/091 W

-----132219Z 110414 /72

R 132000Z MAY 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2805  
INFO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PARIS 14217

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, FR, VN, SN, ASEAN  
SUBJ: FRANCE BRIEFS ASEAN AMBASSADORS ON  
PHAM VON DONG VISIT

REF: PARIS 11631 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: SINGAPORE CHARGE AZIZ TOLD EMBOFF OF THE  
BRIEFING WHICH THE QUAI DIRECTOR FOR ASIA, NOIVILLE,  
GAVE TO THE ASEAN AMBASSADORS AS A GROUP ON MAY 2.  
AZIZ SAID THAT IT WAS THE FRENCH WHO TOOK THE  
INITIATIVE TO CALL THEM IN AND ALSO, FOR THE FIRST  
TIME, TO CALL THEM IN AS A GROUP. THEY WERE AMONG  
THE VERY FIRST AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES TO BE  
BRIEFED BY THE FRENCH. THE SUBSTANCE OF NOIVILLE'S  
BRIEFING WAS SIMILAR TO THAT THE FRENCH PROVIDED  
US (REFTEL). AZIZ SAID THAT THE ASEAN REPRESENTATIVES  
WERE VERY PLEASED BY FRANCE'S TREATING  
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WITH THE ASEAN COUNTRIES AS A GROUP AND FOR SERVING  
AS AN INTERMEDIARY WITH HANOI, INCLUDING WARNING  
THE VIETNAMESE OF THE UNFAVORABLE IMPACT ON  
FRANCO/VIETNAMESE RELATIONS IF VIETNAM DID NOT  
BEHAVE WITH ITS NEIGHBORS. END SUMMARY.

2. NOIVILLE SAID THAT THE VISIT COULD BE BROKEN

INTO THREE PARTS, INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, BILATERAL AID AND OTHER AGREEMENTS OF THAT NATURE AND THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE SRV AND THE PRIVATE FRENCH WITH CLAIMS AGAINST THE SRV. AS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, HE WOULD TELL THEM ONLY ABOUT THE DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING SOUTHEAST ASIA. HE SAID THAT FRANCE MADE IT VERY CLEAR THAT IT WAS INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING ITS RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ITS GENERAL INTEREST IN THE STABILITY OF SEA. ACCORDING TO NOIVILLE FRANCE MADE IT CLEAR THAT IT WOULD BE LOOKING AT HANOI'S ACTIONS IN THAT LIGHT, AND BILATERAL RELATIONS WOULD BE AFFECTED BY FRANCE'S PERCEPTION OF VIETNAM'S ACTIONS WHICH DISTURBED SEA STABILITY.

3. ECONOMIC AID. ACCORDING TO NOIVILLE THEY HAD WORKED OUT A FINANCIAL PROTOCOL FOR 1976 WHICH PROVIDED FOR 650 MILLION FF. NOIVILLE PROFESSED TO KNOW NOTHING ABOUT AN ADDITIONAL 400 MILLION FF FOR THE SOUTH ONLY WHICH SOME OF THE ASIANS HAD HEARD ABOUT. AZIZ COMMENTED THAT IN THE PAST, THE AID HAD BEEN IN GENERAL 30 PERCENT GIFT, 30 PERCENT GOVERNMENT LOANS AND 30 PERCENT COMMERCIAL CREDITS (GUARANTEED BY THE GOF). THE MIX IS NOW MUCH LESS IN FAVOR OF GIFTS. THE TOTAL LONG TERM CREDITS ARE EXPECTED TO GO TO 1.6 BILLION FF PRIMARILY FOR A STEEL FACTORY, CEMENT PLANT, FOOD PROCESSING PLANT, AND A SPINNING FACTORY. HE ELF-AQUITAINE AGREEMENT WITH HANOI PROVIDED FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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12,000 SQ. KM. CONCESSION; THE THAI REPRESENTATIVE NOTED THAT WAS A LARGE AREA WHICH COULD EXTEND RIGHT UP TO THAILAND. NOIVILLE CLAIMED NOT BE KNOWN ITS LOCATION.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PARIS 14217

4. AS FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF FRENCH BUSINESSMEN, NOIVILLE SAID THAT SINCE THESE TALKS WERE BETWEEN PRIVATE FRENCH INTERESTS AND THE VIETNAMESE, HE DID NOT KNOW, OR COULD NOT SAY, WHAT THE FIGURES WERE. HE REFUSED TO COMMENT ON THE FIGURES WHICH THE DIPLOMATS CITED FROM THE PRESS TO THE EFFECT THAT THE FRENCH HAD ORIGINALLY CLAIMED 1.2 BILLION FF, AND HAD FINALLY SETTLED FOR 80 MILLION FF.

5. AZIZ SAID THAT THE ASEAN REPRESENTATIVES CAME AWAY WITH THE BELIEF THAT FRANCE WAS SINCERE IN ITS DESIRE TO HELP ASEAN AND HAD INDEED LET HANOI KNOW THAT ITS RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM WOULD DEPEND ON VIETNAM'S ACTIONS TOWARDS ITS NEIGHBORS. THEY THOUGHT THAT IT WAS ALSO SYMBOLIC, THAT THE FRENCH HAD FOR THE FIRST TIME INITIATED A DEBRIEFING FOR THE GROUPS OF ASEAN AMBASSADORS WHEN THE SUBJECT WAS FRENCH RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM; THE ASEAN REPRESENTATIVES THOUGHT THAT THE SYMBOLISM

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WOULD NOT BE LOST ON THE VIETNAMESE. THE ASEAN COUNTRIES THOUGHT THAT IT WAS VERY HELPFUL FOR FRANCE TO PICK UP THE ROLE OF INTERMEDIARY WITH THE ASEAN COUNTRIES AT A TIME WHEN THE US WAS WITHDRAWN FROM THE SEA SCENE.

6. AT A RECEPTION FOR THE MALAYSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, MALAYSIAN AND FILIPINO MADE SIMILAR COMMENTS ABOUT FRENCH ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASEAN.

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## Message Attributes

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